

of all decisions made by the United States. This is not patriotism. It can be, instead, the road to national disintegration. . . . Critical thinkers and thinking critics constitute the lifeblood of any society."

The President, of course, has the right to disagree with his critics and seek to prove them wrong if he can. But when he holds up honest critics to public scorn and hatred, he demeans himself and his high office and undermines the Constitutional guarantee of free speech. He would serve his country and himself better if he would read and take to heart the splendid words of Cardinal Cushing.

Battle Cry

Cardinal Spellman's recent declaration that anything less than victory in Vietnam would be inconceivable had the ring of Barry Goldwater and Richard Nixon, and was in dreary contrast to the many efforts of Pope Paul VI urging a negotiated peace.

Enough has been written about the Cardinal's trumpet call to make extended comment here superfluous. However, we would like to note that the Cardinal has been fond of saying, "My country, right or wrong," a militant pronouncement which years ago another noted Catholic, G. K. Chesterton, put in proper perspective.

"My country, right or wrong," Chesterton wrote, "is a thing that no patriot would think of saying except in a desperate case. It is like saying, 'My mother, drunk or sober.'"

The Committed Churches

One of the most hopeful developments of the 1960s has been the growing involvement of religious leaders—Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish—in actions which breathe new life into the concept of brotherhood. Clergymen of all faiths have gone South to advance civil rights, to their city halls and state capitals to plead for open housing legislation, and to Congress with appeals for passage of programs to combat racial discrimination and poverty.

This growing social concern of the churches was demonstrated most recently by the Presbytery and the Catholic archdiocese of Chicago. The Presbytery, governing body for some 90,000 church members in that area, announced a program to help carry out the terms of the open housing agreement reached last year by city leaders and the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

At the same time, Archbishop John P. Cody called upon the two million Roman Catholics in 459 Chicago area parishes to take part in study and action programs designed to improve education, housing, and employment opportunities for Negroes. The parishes were asked to work with Protestant and Jewish congregations in these fields of concern.

Each parish is expected to set up a layman's committee. For the first four months, Catholic pastors and laymen are to study racial problems in housing, education, and employment. Then the "action" phase begins. The committees are expected to visit all realtors in their areas to discuss open occupancy, visit lending institutions to urge non-discriminatory lending policies, meet with school and PTA officials in their neighborhoods to "discuss the achievement of quality integrated education," and talk with officers of business firms about the need for fair employment practices.

"As long as any of our brothers and sisters in Christ suffer injustice and indignity in our midst," Archbishop Cody wrote in his letter to all parishes, "we are involved, and we must become involved."

Albert A. Raby, who is co-leader, with Dr. King, of the Chicago Freedom Movement, said, "We are overwhelmed by the comprehensive nature of the Archbishop's program." He expressed himself as "equally pleased" with the action of the Presbyterian church. "Had such a dialogue begun ten years ago," he said, "we might easily have avoided many of the serious problems of the last few years."

An encouraging development on a smaller scale was the appointment by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen of Rochester, New York, of a young priest to be his special vicar to work on problems of housing, education, social justice, and equality. The bishop named the Rev-

erend P. David Finks, a priest in a predominantly Negro ward who was on the advisory council of a militant Negro group. "The church," said the Catholic bishop, "must be where problems are, where hunger is, where rooms are cold and where difficult decisions have to be made." In what might be viewed as a rebuke to those laymen and a dwindling number of clergymen who hold that churches are for "preaching only," the Bishop said, "Stained glass windows are apt to becloud our vision of poverty and distress."

This new surge of church leadership supporting actions against racial discrimination and poverty holds out the hope that these ancient evils may yet be dealt with decisively in the United States in our time.

Privileged Sanctuary

Once again the Central Intelligence Agency has demonstrated that it is a privileged sanctuary above and beyond the reach of the laws that govern the rest of us.

This time the case involved an Estonian emigre who was persuaded by the CIA, for reasons best known to itself, to ruin the reputation of a fellow emigre by accusing him of being a Communist and an agent for the Soviets. The plot succeeded, and the victim brought a slander suit against his accuser.

The CIA refused to allow its paid accuser to testify on the ground that this would imperil the national security. Now a Federal judge has upheld the agency's decision and has thus denied the hapless victim his day in court.

It strikes us that the national security is in greater danger from the CIA's subversion of elementary Constitutional rights than from any revelations that an obscure Estonian emigre would be likely to make in court. Of even greater concern to us is the Federal judge's ruling upholding the CIA. Both the CIA and the court, by arbitrarily denying simple justice to an individual, have denigrated the democratic process.